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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [GM](#) [EU](#)  
SUBJECT: GERMAN CABINET DISCUSSES FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES  
WITH EU COMMISSIONERS

Classified By: DCM John M. Koenig for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: In a joint meeting on foreign affairs between German cabinet ministers and their EU Commission counterparts January 9 in Berlin, EU Trade Commissioner Mandelson was reportedly upbeat about prospects for moving forward on Doha. Participants from both sides agreed UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari should move quickly following the January 21 Serbian elections and discussed steps the EU should take to support Ahtisaari's proposals. Participants discussed a possible ESDP police training mission in Afghanistan without reaching consensus. On Afghanistan, Germany prefers to make better use of current structures, such as the Joint Control and Monitoring Board, as opposed to creating new organizations. On Africa, Germany will focus its G-8 efforts on sustainable investment, HIV, and gender issues. During its EU presidency, Germany will work on economic partnership agreements and improving assistance coordination. End Summary.

12. (C) Foreign Ministry Deputy EU Correspondent Thomas Schieb and MFA Office Director for EU Affairs briefed poloff on the January 9 foreign policy meeting between EU Commissioners and German cabinet ministers. The meeting was divided into two sessions, with the Western Balkans, ESDP, and Africa discussed in the first session and Doha, Russia, and Afghanistan in the second. The German side was represented by Foreign Minister Steinmeier, Defense Minister Jung, Development Minister Wiczorek-Zeul, and Economics Minister Glos. External Relations Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, Enlargement Commissioner Rehn, Trade Commissioner Mandelson, and Development Commissioner Michel participated on the EU side.

Doha

13. (C) Schieb and Schoof both stated that this was a long session and that Mandelson was upbeat about the possibility of moving forward on Doha. Mandelson said he was convinced that President Bush wanted Doha concluded sooner rather than later. Mandelson reportedly stated we are now moving to the end game on Doha, and he received clear signals of support from both the White House and Congress. Steinmeier reported that President Bush seemed to appreciate Merkel's clear commitment to Doha. Steinmeier agreed that we are approaching the end game and that it was important that the EU refrain from causing any new difficulties. In a separate meeting with EMIN, Chancellery DG for Economics Jens Weidmann, reporting on the larger meeting between the German cabinet and EU Commissioners, said Mandelson was upbeat regarding his meetings in Washington.

Western Balkans

¶4. (C) Steinmeier and Rehn agreed that Ahtisaari needs the full support of the EU and should move quickly after the January 21 Serbian elections. Steinmeier thought the General Affairs and External Relations Council would be prepared to fully endorse Ahtisaari's proposals at its February 12 meeting. There was additional discussion on how to mollify Serbia given the likelihood that Ahtisaari will propose increased sovereignty for Kosovo. There was some discussion of resuming SAA negotiations, but no conclusions were reached due to concerns over weakening ICTY conditionality. Participants concluded that the Serbian public would be more likely to accept Ahtisaari's decision if they believed Serbia had a clear prospect of EU membership, but how to create this perception was unresolved.

#### Afghanistan

¶5. (C) Participants discussed the possibility of an ESDP mission without any resolution. Ferrero-Waldner highlighted the importance of expanding the scope of EU engagement beyond police training to include judicial reform. Although there was discussion of France's idea to create a contact group to improve coordination of the international community's efforts in Afghanistan, participants agreed most EU member states oppose this idea. Germany stated its preference to make use of current structures such as the Joint Control and Monitoring rather than creating new organizations.

#### ESDP

¶6. (C) Steinmeier and Jung led a short session praising the various ESDP missions. Jung highlighted the importance of EU-NATO cooperation. The Commission highlighted the importance of combining civil and military aspects to bring about success.

#### Russia

¶7. (C) Steinmeier discussed his call to the Russian Deputy Prime Minister to discuss the Russia-Belarus energy dispute. Ferrero-Waldner said she was trying to create a pragmatic solution on the Poland-Russia meat dispute which had prompted Poland to hold up agreement on starting EU negotiations with Russia on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. Mandelson reported that these and other (unspecified) problems were making Russia's WTO accession more difficult.

#### Africa

¶8. (C) Wiecezorek-Zeul highlighted the importance placed on Africa in Germany's EU and G-8 presidencies. On the G-8 side, Germany will focus on sustainable investment, HIV and gender issues. Germany will also seek to fulfill past G-8 commitments to Africa. During its EU presidency, Germany will focus on Economic Partnership Agreements and better coordination of assistance from member states. Michel stressed the importance of having a clear and well coordinated development strategy and the continued need for structural reform within Africa. (Note: Development Ministry contacts report Germany's G-8/EU African development agenda to crystallize after Wiecezorek-Zeul and German President Koehler return from a visit to the region next week. Foreign Ministry officials have previously talked about building on past efforts with Africa and establishing examples to which other African states can work as they take steps necessary for development. End note.)

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